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DEFENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT
CONTRACTS.

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SPEECH

OF

HON. HENRY L. DAWES,

OF MASSACHUSETTS,

DELIVERED

IN THE U. S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

APRIL 25, 1862,

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WASHINGTON, D. C.

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S P E E C H .

The House having under consideration resolutions heretofore reported by the Committee on Government Contracts—

Mr. DAWES said :

Mr. SPEAKER : I do not know that I shall have any disposition to say a single word in opposition to the amendment just submitted by the gentleman from Indiana. When he comes to know the course which this committee has pursued a little more fully than he seems to do now, he will find no occasion for offering it in the light of an admonition to them. The abstract principle I agree with entirely, and to its application, individually, I have no objection.

The evidence before the committee touching the second resolution has been reported to the House. It is proposed at this time to ask the attention of the House to that resolution and to the evidence which sustains it, and to call for a vote upon it.

But, sir, the House will expect from the committee, I doubt not—they certainly have a right to expect from them before they call upon the House to vote upon that resolution—some allusion to matters which have transpired in this House within the last few days. Sir, on Monday last the committee on Government contracts was for a second time in its absence honored with a premeditated and, as it would appear from the Globe, a preconcerted attack upon the personal character and integrity of its members. The committee received notice of this attack by the telegraph when they were quietly and, as they supposed, faithfully discharging the duties the House imposed upon them in the city of New York; and inasmuch as the telegraph was silent upon the fact that it was announced to the House that no member of the committee was present during that attack, it went forth that no reply of the committee was made to it at all, and that they were to be held as silently confessing its justice and its truth. They can hardly expect, and have no right to expect, the House to vote for the resolution if the charges made against the committee on Monday last

have any foundation in truth, and therefore it is that it is incumbent upon them, before asking that vote, to say whatever they may have to say upon the character of these attacks.

The House will bear the members of the committee out in the assertion, that although much time has been occupied in this House concerning it and its transactions, they have never occupied one moment of its time except in self-defence; they have never taken up one moment of the time of this House in speeches touching their mission or its results, and have only sought, when driven to it, to defend themselves as well as they may.

The nature of this second, as of the first, attack on the committee, in its absence, is such that it forbids their silence. That the House should differ with the committee in its conclusions, that the House should differ with the committee in its arguments and in its method of proceeding, is most natural. Differences of that kind with committees of the House are of daily occurrence. They are always expected, and are always to be met in good temper and without complaint by any committee charged in this House with any of its duties. But attacks upon the integrity and personal character of members of a committee are, I am happy to say, somewhat unusual in this House. Yet it has been the peculiar experience of this committee to encounter them more than once in its progress.

These attacks, Mr. Speaker, have been always made upon the committee in its absence. So far as I am able to know, they resolve themselves into but two charges. I ask the attention of the House, not to any refutation of arguments or conclusions, but simply to questions impugning the committee's integrity of purpose and its fidelity to the House. They consist, I say, of two points. In a report of evidence containing more than eleven hundred printed pages, the diligence and scrutiny of those who have felt it their mission to seek after the mistakes of this committee have found out only two mistakes. The first was that which was the foun-

dation of the attack made upon it in its absence by the gentleman representing one of the Philadelphia districts, [Mr. KELLEY.] It was that the committee had made use of a misprint in the testimony, for which it was not answerable, because not having originated with it, and in regard to which I showed on a former occasion two things—first, that it was entirely the work of the printer, of which no member of the committee had the slightest knowledge; and secondly, that it was immaterial, not altering in one particle the meaning and substance of the testimony in which it occurred.

The second was made the basis of an attack upon the committee last Monday. That was a mistake in the name of an individual. In an investigation running through eleven hundred pages, it has been the good fortune of another of the distinguished Representatives of Pennsylvania to detect a single mistake. It so happened that two men in this whole country had the same name, and that a very peculiar one—a foreign name—Sacchi—and that the committee has confounded the two persons. These are the only two mistakes of fact—that of the printer and this one—which I have heard of as having been charged upon this committee. They have both been charged to have been wilfully and dishonestly made.

Mr. MOORHEAD. I ask the gentleman from Massachusetts whether the mistake that he acknowledges now was acknowledged publicly heretofore by the committee, when it was required to do so?

Mr. DAWES. The first moment that the attention of the committee was called to it, that moment it admitted the mistake, and pointed out how it occurred.

Mr. MOORHEAD. And made public reparation for having charged a man with having an amount of Government money in his hands, and admitted that to be a mistake.

Mr. DAWES. The committee did not admit that it had made one particle of mistake touching the point to which the gentleman alludes; but I am not going to consume any part of my hour by rearguing to this House that there is no difference between a man saying he has in the hands of a third party a given sum of money, and his saying that it is there subject to his own order. The pretence that there is a difference is a mere quibble, beneath the common sense of this House.

I was about to say that these two are the only accusations against the committee as yet made

in the House. General Fremont, however, has made another, to which I desire to call the attention of the committee on the conduct of the war, for the mere purpose of setting this committee right. I have no purpose in bringing into this controversy any accusation against General Fremont. In the lately published statement of General Fremont, made before the committee on the conduct of the war, he charged the committee on Government contracts with having come to St. Louis encouraging insubordination in his department; that they created a public opinion there that it was their object to cause his removal; that they refused to receive evidence offered them in explanation of matters inquired into by them, and suppressed testimony which had been received by them; *and that he would offer evidence to that committee to sustain these charges.*

I wish to ask the members of the committee on the conduct of the war—and I see one member, the gentleman from New York, [Mr. ODELL,] in his seat—whether any evidence has been offered to that committee to sustain this charge. If it is not an improper inquiry, will the gentleman from New York do me the favor to answer it?

Mr. ODELL. There is no evidence of that character before the committee, save that given by General Fremont himself in his statement, so far as I recollect.

Mr. DAWES. That is all I desire to say touching that matter. The charge is of a serious character, and I know that that committee would have notified us of any testimony that had been offered to sustain it.

I now recur to the second of these charges made in the House. It is of such a character, if the House remembers what appears in the Globe, that no man, having any self-respect, could pass it over without asking for the evidence on which it is sustained. A gentleman stands up in the House and declares that he believes in his conscience that this committee has perpetrated more frauds than it has detected—that it is a lying committee—a scandal-hunting committee, expending the people's money and bringing disgrace on the public servants. The only evidence brought in support of the charge is, what I have already stated, that the committee has confounded two persons of the same name. The committee expected to meet all other accusations of shortcomings on their part. They had not expected to meet an attack of this kind. I am sorry

that the gentleman who made it [Mr. STEVENS] is not now in his seat. I informed him but a few moments ago, while he was in the House, that I was about to call the attention of the House to the remarks which he made at that time. He felt it his duty, as I suppose, to withdraw from the House on business which to him appeared to be more pressing than to remain and hear what I had to say.

Mr. COLFAX. Will the gentleman permit me to say a word?

Mr. DAWES. Yes.

Mr. COLFAX. The gentleman from Pennsylvania desired me to state, if his absence should be alluded to, that before the gentleman from Massachusetts had notified him of his intention to allude to his speech, he had made an appointment with some friends from Pennsylvania, who had to leave this afternoon, and that he could not break his engagement.

Mr. DAWES. Mr. Speaker, I do not feel that I am called upon, after having given the gentleman notice, to wait for his return. The committee is obliged to my colleague, [Mr. THOMAS,] prompted by that sense of justice which pervades his whole being, for calling the attention of the gentleman from Pennsylvania on Monday last, in the midst of his accusatory philippic against the committee, to the fact that no member of the committee was then present in the House. We are obliged to my colleague for two reasons: first, because the *Globe* now shows the reason why no reply was then made to this serious accusation; and secondly, because the subsequent course of the gentleman from Pennsylvania illustrated, better than anything I can say on this occasion, the motives which prompted that attack on the committee. While admitting the force and propriety of the suggestion of my colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania was so charged with that accusation against the committee that he said he could not be stopped from making it, then and there, by any such consideration as the fact that the committee was absent from the House when it was made. It would seem from the report in the *Globe* that there was even a feeling of relief from all restraint on the part of the gentleman from Pennsylvania when he came to be assured that all the members of the committee were absent. His speech leaves a conviction, certainly, on the minds of those who were the subjects of that attack, that it was to him an opportune occasion on which to be delivered of that with

which he had been charged for some time. The committee have had occasion, as I have repeated, to encounter these charges from different quarters, in this House and out of it. They know better than the House or the public can what has been the course of their proceedings, and they have, therefore, been better able to appreciate these charges than the public or this House can, and they have accepted them from time to time as testimonials to their fidelity in the duty with which they have been charged.

Sir, any lawyer in threading the complicated labyrinths of conspiracies, deceits, and frauds, knows very well when he puts his finger upon the key to the whole. The physician, probing an abscess, be it ever so deep, be it ever so foul, is at no time at a loss to know when he touches the quick. It is the galled jade that winces, or there is no truth in England's poet. And therefore the committee have been prepared for all this, and have accepted cheerfully, as a tribute to their fidelity, from time to time, this rustling and this fluttering, even this bitterness and malignity, heaped upon them. It is only because the House and the country are ignorant of the hidden springs, sometimes far off, which move men, that they are compelled to self-defence.

Why were we arraigned here on Monday last in our absence? The occasion arose from no matter connected with us or with any of our proceedings. We had not at all arraigned anybody in this House. It appears from the *Globe* that the discussion arose from a resolution introduced into this House by the gentleman from New York, [Mr. DIVEN] on my right, introduced without the knowledge of the committee, and I am sure the gentleman will say, without any responsibility on our part; to which the committee, if they had been here in the House at the time, would have had nothing to say. The gentleman from New York, actuated by what he felt to be a sense of duty, introduced a resolution here, in consequence of no action proposed by this committee, but it was seized upon as an opportunity to destroy the confidence of the House and the confidence of the country in this committee, and the confidence of all honest men in them as individuals.

Sir, it is known to the public that there has been a systematic effort to break down this committee. It has found its way into pamphlet form begotten by contractors, containing a deliberate attack on the individual members of the committee; and which wisdom or some

other monitor suggested would be more effective, if, instead of seeing the light in the form of the pamphlet opposition of contractors, it could take on the form of an attack in this House from members of the House itself; and hence it is that that which was originally intended merely as a pamphlet crusade against this committee has acquired that additional strength and influence which ought to attach to statements made in this House by members upon their responsibility.

I am not surprised to learn what was the effect of that statement upon the House. I am not surprised that the House, were ready, almost, in the absence of the committee, to order their discharge from further duty when it had been stated that they themselves had committed frauds, when it was stated that they themselves had lied, that they had squandered the people's money in the guise of an effort to save it. I only wondered that my friend from Pennsylvania on my left, who, I understand, had charge of a resolution on that occasion to discharge the committee from further duties, refrained from offering it.

Mr. MOORHEAD. As the gentleman has referred to me, I wish to say that I was not charged with any such resolution; but I think I have had reason to vote for such a resolution when it does come before the House. I repeat that I was not charged with any such resolution, and do not propose to offer any.

Mr. DAWES. I do not know as the gentleman ever did draft any particular resolution, or that it was handed to him, or that he was waiting for an opportune moment to offer it. I only know that the gentleman announced himself ready to vote for such a resolution, and I only wonder that he did not offer and the House pass such a resolution.

Mr. MOORHEAD. I understood the gentleman to assert that I was charged with such a resolution.

Mr. DAWES. I only took the gentleman from Pennsylvania to be a candid man, a man of good judgment, with a disposition to do what was right. I was only alluding to the effect which the charge made upon the committee on Monday last must have had upon the gentleman, and saying to the House that I did not wonder that gentlemen under the influences of such a charge were ready to offer and adopt such a motion as the gentleman from Pennsylvania now says he is ready to vote for. He sees, I trust, the force of my remark. It is due to the

gentleman's candor and sensitiveness to what he believes to be right. I would not for a moment believe that there is any lack of courage on his part to move that resolution.

Now, sir, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, [Mr. STEVENS,] in the discussion of another matter which had no reference to the committee, travelled out of that discussion to accuse the committee. It was thought necessary, in order to defeat the resolution of the gentleman from New York, to accuse the committee on Government contracts with being enemies of General Fremont. The committee had said nothing in reference to General Fremont. They had never, in this House or elsewhere, made any accusation against General Fremont.

Whether correctly or not, it was supposed that certain documents brought before the House, official documents, by the committee in their report, reflected upon General Fremont. And therefore the committee were charged with being the enemies of General Fremont, and that going out to St. Louis as his enemies, we were seeking after cause for his removal. Now, I am able to say, as one who knows quite as much about the real sentiments and feelings of every member of that committee as perhaps any gentleman in this House, that the gentleman from Pennsylvania who has made this accusation is entirely mistaken upon that point. It will be somewhat new to my constituents, who know me quite as well as the gentleman from Pennsylvania does, to hear at this late day that I am counted one of the enemies of General Fremont. It will be equally unjust to every other member of the committee to make the accusation against them. I have importuned his special friends to warn him against false friends, wolves in sheep's clothing, who were bankrupting him in fortune and character. I have not been otherwise his enemy.

The mistake into which my kind friend from Indiana [Mr. COLFAX] has fallen, and all other members who have arraigned this committee for the method in which they have pursued their investigations, lies right here: they forget what duties the committee were charged with. My friend referred, with great pride, to the proceedings of an investigating committee in a former Congress, and he held it up as a pattern for us to follow. He forgets that the one committee was charged with investigating the conduct of individuals, and that the other committee was charged solely with investigating

the character of contracts; that we were to examine those contracts without regard to persons, and that we had nothing to do with persons in the investigation of those contracts. He says we failed in our duty, because when we went out to St. Louis we did not invite General Fremont to aid us in investigations touching the contracts which McKinsty had entered into there, as quartermaster, for the purpose of carrying on the war. Why, sir, we went out there without knowing General Fremont, or General Fremont's accusers in that department. We were treated with kindness and attention by both sides, and we felt it prudent to decline all proffers of hospitality extended to us upon either side, and in our investigations there to imitate, humbly as we might, but as far as in us lay, that personification of Justice which hangs in all our courts, and which makes her blindfold—hearing, but not seeing, men. We were no respecters of persons. We were charged with the duty of examining into contracts made, and the report upon which would be a matter of consideration for the House.

Therefore it is that I care not for the amendment of the gentleman from Indiana, [Mr. COLFAX,] for it may be that it should be adopted as a proper course of examination when it has any application to the subject of it, and not otherwise.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania says we went out there as the enemies of Fremont, pursuing him. And what was the awful result? That when we found out a contract made there about horses—a contract, about which the quartermaster who made it said he had spent hours and weeks and months in trying to find, without any success, the man Sacchi, who made it—we blundered in the name. The quartermaster who made this inquiry was a tried soldier of the regular army, who has served for many a year in that capacity, with unquestioned integrity. In reference to this Sacchi, who had this contract, Quartermaster Turnley says—not the committee, though we are held responsible for what the quartermaster said:

"It came out that Sacchi was nobody, a man of straw, living in a garret in New York, whom nobody knew anything about; a man who was brought here (St. Louis) as a good person through whom to work. That rather recoiled upon Wood, who brought him to me."

That is the language of Captain Turnley of the regular army, and not the language of the committee. And yet the gentleman from Pennsyl-

vania arraigns the committee, and says that there are two things, dreadful and awful—*dishonest* is the word used—and the result of fraud upon the part of the committee; for he says it turned out afterwards, on the affidavit of the man himself, that this Sacchi, whom the witness said was nobody, was somebody, and did not live in anybody's garret in New York, but had given deeds and mortgages in New York—especially mortgages—as to which he referred to the records. And just at this moment, as appears by the *Globe*, in the midst of that most intense and terrific philippic of the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. STEVENS] against the committee for this mistake of theirs, rises the gentleman from New York, [Mr. ROSCOE CONKLING,] as if intending to interrupt the gentleman from Pennsylvania for some important communication absolutely necessary at that point, and wishes the gentleman from Pennsylvania to give way right there. The gentleman from Pennsylvania gives way, and the gentleman from New York says he wishes to call the attention of the House, in this connection, to the "star of Bethlehem" [laughter] and the "crusade for freedom in freedom's holy land." [Renewed laughter.] But the gentleman from Pennsylvania was in no mood for poetry, and thrust aside the gentleman's sentimentality and eloquence. He felt, as it appears from the *Globe*, too much as the bloodhound does at the moment of springing upon the throat of his victim, to be interrupted by poetry; and he exclaims, as much as to say, "away with your 'star of Bethlehem' and your 'crusade for freedom in freedom's holy land!'"—says he does not care any more about that than he does about the contract for horses, though steeped in fraud dark as the bottomless pit. What does he care if it is fraudulent? He says, "it is enough for me to know that he (Sacchi) was not the man who made the horse contract at all;" it is enough for me to know that I have detected the committee, not in any mistake about the fraudulent character of the contract—I don't care a copper about that—but in the great mistake of supposing that one man, bearing the same name, happened to be another man who bore that name; and then, upon the strength of that, rising in triumph over the committee he exclaims:

"And if the committee had had an honest purpose to know the truth, they would have known that; and yet they fill several pages of their report in charging that Fremont gave this contract to a member of his own staff. I ask

what you would think of the testimony of such a witness found lying one day? Would you believe him on the next?"

And here, just at this point, he addresses some able lawyer of the House—the *Globe* does not do him justice here, for it does not state to whom he alludes—

"You are an able lawyer, and know how much credit such a witness is entitled to. You know that if he is found falsifying in one case, you will not believe him in any."

This is the charge, *falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*; they make a mistake in reference to the individual, and that is enough for me. I charge them with lying; I charge them with falsehood; and I ask some able lawyer in this House if it is not enough? Such is substantially the language of the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

But I do not want to do injustice to this scene; and I beg the House to let me read this language just as it occurred, in order that the whole beauty and force of this passage may be better seen than I can describe it. I said that in the midst of this accusation of the gentleman from Pennsylvania, the gentleman from New York, whom I like always to hear, for he is always eloquent, always classical, sometimes biblical, rushes to the floor, and says:

"Will the gentleman allow me to make a remark just there?"

"Mr. STEVENS. Yes, sir.

"Mr. ROSCOE CONKLING. This young man Sacchi, who is named here, is, I understand, a man who has been decorated for heroic actions upon the battle-fields of Italy more than once, a man who came here following the star of freedom as the shepherds followed the star of Bethlehem, and went out into that department and joined Fremont's staff, not for pay, not for rank, but as a volunteer; a man who came here, in the language of another, 'to crusade for freedom in freedom's holy land.'

"Mr. STEVENS. It is enough for me to know that he is not the man who made the horse contract at all."

[The reading of the above extract excited great merriment in the House.]

The gentleman from New York will pardon me—for he knows that I appreciate the beauty of that passage as well as he does—for saying that that elegant passage of his in connection with the speech of the gentleman from Pennsylvania, reminds me of what my friend from Missouri [Mr. ROLLINS] said yesterday of the pearl in the toad's head. [Great laughter.] And then the gentleman from Pennsylvania exclaims: "It is enough; my soul is satisfied; I have the committee by the throat; here is a

mistake in the name of an individual; *falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*; I put it to the ablest lawyer in this House: are not the committee liars?" Sir, it reminds me of a lawyer who told me that upon a certain occasion he undertook, with what success he might be able, to defend a criminal detected in *flagrante delicto*, and, as is always the custom when men are so detected, the only defence was to set up an *alibi*. He proved the *alibi* with great success; the man had never been on the spot, and knew not where the spot was where the crime had been committed; and toward the close, the prisoner, thinking he was something of a lawyer also, got up and insisted on putting in his view of the case, and declared to the jury that he could show them that the witnesses swore falsely when they said there were two lights in the room; he told them, as my friend from Pennsylvania said here, upon his conscience, that there was only one light in that room that night, and then exclaimed, triumphantly, in the language of the gentleman from Pennsylvania, "witnesses who can be false in one thing are false in all—*falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*!" The difficulty was in the verdict of the jury more than in the theory of the defendant on that occasion. He may have convinced them that the witnesses were mistaken about the light, but in doing it he confessed his own guilt. So here these men may convince the House and country that the committee have made a mistake in a name; but if that is all in this book of 1400 pages, then the stupendous frauds it discloses stand confessed.

Mr. WASHBURN. If my friend will give way for a moment, as illustrating this Sacchi contract, which has so much sympathy here, I desire to read an extract from the report of the Holt and Davis commission in St. Louis. It seems that a certain number of horses were really bought under that contract, amounting to some six or seven thousand dollars, but when the matter came to be exposed, there was no man who dared to come before the commission and make that claim. They say:

"Though the claim was for the large sum of \$6,500, none of the original papers were filed, nor did Mr. Bitting [the man who claimed to own it] ever appear before us. It is hardly possible that he would have run the chance of losing a claim of such magnitude, unless there had been some urgent reason for declining to submit himself to such an examination, either on his own account, or on that of the persons from whom he obtained an assignment of the contract."

That is what the Holt commission say.

Mr. DAWES. True. But what matters it that the Holt commission find that the contract *was* fraudulent? What matters it, if that commission, composed of such men as Judge DAVID DAVIS, known to the people of my district where he spent his early days, as well as to the people of Illinois, to be just and true—of JOSEPH HOLT, who, in a time not very far distant in the past, was one of those patriots who snatched the nation itself from out of the jaws of dissolution; and of HUGH CAMPBELL, worthy to be their associate—what if this commission has sustained every position, and substantiated more than every finding of the committee in the Western Department, and has saved the Treasury millions of dollars? What matters it that that commission was the result of the investigations of this committee and was recommended by it; or that its success has produced another, now in session in this city, with the same HOLT at its head, saving, if sustained, other millions to the Treasury? What matters all this if the committee made a mistake in a name?

Mr. KELLEY. I would ask the gentleman from Illinois whether the contract to which that passage refers was a contract made by a member of General Fremont's staff? For that is the question in issue now. Does that paragraph refer to a contract made by a member of General Fremont's staff?

Mr. DAWES. I will dispose of that question. It refers to a contract drafted by Captain Turnley, of the regular army, by the direction of J. C. Woods, upon General Fremont's staff, sitting in General Fremont's office, or else Captain Turnley is mistaken. That is all. My friend from Indiana [Mr. SHANKS] suggests, which I believe is true, that Woods was directed to make it by Fremont himself.

Mr. SHANKS. Captain Turnley was directed to do it.

Mr. DAWES. I have studied, in order to avoid other complications in this matter, not to mention Fremont's name, or anything that reflects upon him, during this discussion. Whatever there may be in that matter, the committee on Government contracts are on trial at this time, and not General Fremont or any of his party.

Mr. KELLEY. Will the gentleman yield to me for a single question?

Mr. DAWES. If the House will let me have my time, I have no objection.

Mr. KELLEY. I simply want to ask

whether Auguste Sacchi, of General Fremont's staff, had part or lot in the contract to which that paragraph relates? He has a character as well as other men.

Mr. DAWES. Well, my dear sir, do be patient with me, and hear me till I get to the end. I was about to say that the committee are on trial on a charge of dishonesty for making a mistake and confounding the Sacchi who made the contract with this Sacchi upon General Fremont's staff. The gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. STEVENS,] who took command of the attack on Monday—and in which attack my friend from the Philadelphia district acted only as a subaltern—charged the committee, upon that occasion, with occupying several pages of their report in attempting to prove, that that Sacchi was the same Sacchi who was upon General Fremont's staff, when every word in the report touching that point is contained in three lines, which I have before me, and which I will read:

"It will hardly be believed that the name of this same Sacchi appears in the newspapers as being on the staff of General Fremont, at Springfield, with the rank of captain."

That is all—just three lines. The committee supposing that the name referred to the same individual, called attention to the fact that the newspapers contained that name. And yet the gentleman from Pennsylvania felt justified in saying that we devoted several pages of our report to an endeavor to prove that fact! Now, it is absolutely necessary to convict the gentleman from Pennsylvania of utter ignorance of what he was talking about, in order to acquit him of an intentional misrepresentation of the committee.

Mr. KELLEY made a remark which was inaudible at the reporters' desk.

Mr. DAWES. As the gentleman seems desirous of taking part in this controversy, I will just say to him that when he attacked the committee in its absence several weeks since, we accepted his apology that he did it inadvertently, although the Globe shows that his attention was called to the fact, when he rose to make that attack, that the committee were absent from the House; and the gentleman returned to the attack the first time he found the committee again absent from the House. This is the only remark I desire to make in this connection touching his disposition to assault the committee in its absence. If the final report of the committee does not reveal why the

gentleman is desirous of undermining the confidence of the House in the committee, then there may be occasion for us to remark further upon the question, why, upon two distinct occasions, when the committee were absent, the gentleman felt it to be his bounden duty to undertake to undermine the confidence of the House and the country in the committee.

Now I wish to call the attention of the House distinctly to the motives which prompted the attack of Monday last. When the House and the country come to know, as the committee knows, what prompted this attack, they will appreciate it quite as well as the committee does. The committee encountered no such opposition from the gentleman from Pennsylvania, the chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, in the early stages of their investigation. It was only when the committee, in the way of its duty, came to throw itself between the Treasury of the United States and a private speculation in which one Simon Stevens was interested, and through which \$90,000 was to be taken out of the Treasury of the United States, without a dollar of consideration, in the simple sale and repurchase of five thousand arms by the United States, that the committee encountered the opposition of the chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means. It first manifested itself in delaying the appropriation to pay the expenses of the committee, and it then brought out a speech in the House ridiculing the committee and the committee's efforts to rescue the Treasury from the vampires that had seized upon it and the harpies that hung around and hovered over it. And last of all, it culminated in an attack last Monday on the integrity and character of the committee, and that, too, after the gentleman from Pennsylvania had been duly notified that every member of the committee was absent and could not reply. The amendment offered by him to the second resolution looks to the same end. Sir, if that fact had gone forth with his charge, the committee would have been content to have put themselves with it on their country and to have waited for the verdict.

Sir, I am not permitted to overlook also the connection of others in this matter. Although I had not the privilege of being present during the fore part of this week, when this scene transpired, I am informed that a distinguished ex-functionary of the Government was here in this House as the generalissimo on that occasion. I am informed that subsequently he ap-

peared at the seat of the distinguished member from Pennsylvania, [Mr. STEVENS,] and congratulated him on the signal success of his achievement over the committee in their absence, and that he conferred with the lieutenant in that attack, [Mr. KELLEY,] and with my other distinguished friend from Pennsylvania, [Mr. MOORHEAD,] who feels courage enough, and is sufficiently prompted by a sense of duty, to vote for the discharge of the committee. Sir, I had hoped not to be compelled to allude to any one else in connection with this matter; but justice to the committee requires me to call attention to these singular coincidences.

That is not all. The committee has had fair notice served upon it by this distinguished ex-Secretary that its members are to hear from him elsewhere. Why, sir, the accusation which the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. KELLEY] made on the committee a few weeks ago was published as an advertisement in the newspaper in my present district, in the vain attempt to make the people of my district believe that I was not an honest man. Of course the gentleman from Pennsylvania did not pay for that advertisement. [Laughter.] Of course it could not be the distinguished Secretary, who had served notice on every member of the committee that he would be laid out in his own district at the next election. I know not who paid for the advertisement, nor do I care. No man who was here at the last session of the last Congress can forget how the distinguished chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means made it public that he had represented to President Lincoln the true character of that distinguished individual and the danger of taking him into his Cabinet; how gentlemen from Pennsylvania protested in writing to President Lincoln against taking him into the Cabinet; and yet we find how, one by one, they were; some of them at least, brought up before President Lincoln, on their knees, and made to retract it all.

A MEMBER. Not all of them.

Mr. DAWES. "Not all." The exceptions were not as many as were necessary to save Sodom. [Laughter.] I am happy to say, Mr. Speaker, that although I have been compelled to speak thus of gentlemen from Pennsylvania, I do not reflect on Pennsylvania herself. I only speak of the power of that distinguished ex-Secretary over individual men. I am happy to know that Pennsylvania is true when she is

herself, and that she is herself on this floor as well as elsewhere.

Mr. McKNIGHT. Will my friend from Massachusetts yield to me a moment?

Mr. DAWES. Yes, sir.

Mr. McKNIGHT. I desire to say, as the gentleman has not particularized members of the Pennsylvania delegation, that, so far as I am concerned, I am one of the members from Pennsylvania who protested to President Lincoln against the admission of Mr. Cameron into the Cabinet, and that I never withdrew nor qualified that protest.

Mr. MOORHEAD. As my colleague has taken occasion to set himself right, I desire to say that I recommended the appointment of General Cameron to the Cabinet, that I worked heartily to accomplish it, and that I am here ready to stand by it. I believe that it was a good appointment, and that it represented the people of Pennsylvania.

Mr. DAWES. I desire to say, in reply to the gentleman from Pennsylvania, that the newspapers did not leave us in ignorance at the time—

[Here the hammer fell.]

Mr. KELLEY obtained the floor.

Mr. KELLOGG, of Michigan. I hope the gentleman's time will be extended. [Cries of "Go on."]

Mr. ROSCOE CONKLING. I object.

Mr. KELLEY. I wish it understood that I did not object; but I should like to have the floor when the gentleman is done, without his time being taken out of mine.

Mr. DAWES. I thought there was a tacit acquiescence on the part of the House that if I yielded the floor to gentlemen my time would be extended.

The SPEAKER. Does the gentleman from New York withdraw his objection?

Mr. ROSCOE CONKLING. I decline to withdraw it. I have listened as long as I desire to listen to refuting an attack which no one has ever made on the committee.

Mr. KELLEY. I hope the gentleman from New York will withdraw his objection.

Mr. DAWES. Allow me to say that, when I was asked to yield to other gentlemen, I understood the House to assent to my proposition, that my time should be extended. I regret that the gentleman from New York did not object at that time, as I would then have saved my own time.

Mr. ROSCOE CONKLING. I raise the point of order that the gentleman from Pennsylvania is entitled to the floor, and must either occupy it or yield it. The time of the gentleman from Massachusetts having expired, it is not in order for him to pursue this discussion.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Pennsylvania cannot yield the floor if objection be made.

Mr. KELLEY. I am willing to yield the floor, but not the time, and therefore I will proceed.

Mr. ROSCOE CONKLING. I object to that.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman cannot yield except unconditionally.

At the close of Mr. KELLEY's remarks Mr. DAWES obtained the floor, and concluded as follows:

I do not desire to be turned aside from my original purpose in this discussion by any question as to the propriety of the purchases of Alexander Cummings in April of last year, or the propriety of giving, in the midst of a snow-storm, straw hats and linen pantaloons to the shivering soldiers of Maine and Massachusetts, on their way to defend the capital. I do not desire to enter into that question, for I arose to finish the few remarks I designed to make when I opened this discussion.

But before going further, I ask the pardon of the gentleman from New York [Mr. Roscoe Conkling] for wounding his feelings so seriously in the poor attempt I made at pleasantry when appreciating the beauties of his remarks. I found them a gem in such strange settings that I was incautiously led to make the remarks I did. I was innocent of any design to wound him.

One complaint of the gentleman from Pennsylvania, the chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, [Mr. STEVENS,] and in reference to which nothing but the rule of the House prevented him from moving to discharge the committee, was that the committee were expending the people's money. Now, I wish to ask the gentleman from Pennsylvania if he has any idea what this committee has cost, over and above what they have saved to the Treasury thus far? I want to know whether he had the slightest idea about that when he charged upon the committee such expenditure and such extravagance as to justify him in moving to discharge them from further duty, and that, too, in their absence?

But before I go further, and lest I forget it, it is due to the Pennsylvania delegation in the House that I should be more explicit upon the matter to which I have before alluded. I spoke of the great influence of an ex-Secretary over men, and I spoke of the attempt upon his part to accomplish a certain end in that way. I alluded, what seemed to be well known as a fact, to his influence upon distinguished gentlemen from Pennsylvania, in and about and out of the last Congress. I think, upon the testimony I have received here since I made that

remark, that I ought to say that none of those gentlemen, members of the present House at least, were induced by any consideration to withdraw the protest they filed with the President. I think there is no doubt of the fact, however. The newspaper publications announced, and it was never contradicted, that many of the gentlemen who were induced to sign such a protest were also induced, by the exercise of that influence always attendant on great minds and great men over others not so great, to withdraw that protest.

But to return; I was asking the gentleman from Pennsylvania about the expenses of this committee. The gentleman is before me, and as I have put the matter in the form of an interrogatory, I hope the gentleman will at some time indicate to the House his knowledge upon that subject.

Mr. STEVENS. What question does the gentleman put to me?

Mr. DAWES. Whether the gentleman is aware of the expenses of that committee over and above what they have saved to Government?

Mr. STEVENS made a reply which was not distinctly heard by the reporters, but the purport of which was understood to be, that he hoped to have an opportunity hereafter to reply to the gentleman's remarks and interrogatories.

Mr. DAWES. I stated to the House on a former occasion that the committee had endeavored to render its action as practical as possible, and whenever they had discovered what they thought to be a fraudulent or profligate contract, to lay it before the proper Department; the Department co-operating with the committee in correcting abuses. Arithmetic shows that the committee had brought back—when this report was made—in dollars and cents, into the Treasury, just about the amount of their current expenses; and they have saved, in contracts, amounts which would seem almost fabulous in other times. I may be permitted to allude to a single contract which was made last September—made by the then Secretary of War himself, Mr. Cameron—its terms not known at the Ordnance Bureau until three days before he resigned, for the purchase of one hundred and fifty thousand muskets abroad, to be inspected abroad by a man sent out there by the War Department, and whose expenses were to be borne by the parties selling the arms, and under such circumstances

that the man who was sent out by the party who had made this contract with the Secretary of War, went out under an assumed name; a brother-in-law of a distinguished officer of a Pennsylvania railroad. Brothers-in-law, I may be permitted to say, are very fortunate in these times, and if I ever begin life again I will take care to be somebody's brother-in-law. [Laughter.] I say I may be permitted to refer to such a contract, and when this committee came to investigate it, the parties came straightway here before the commission on ordnance and ordnance stores, now sitting in this city, and consented to a settlement of it upon terms by which \$1,300,000 have been saved to the Government in a single contract. That contract, I say, was made by the then Secretary of War himself, and, as appears by the document I have before me, its terms were not known to the Ordnance Bureau until the 10th day of January last, three days before the Secretary resigned.

In connection with this statement, I sent up to the Clerk a document, and ask him to read what I have marked. It is a document addressed to the Senate of the United States by the then Secretary of War. It bears date the 15th day of January last, two days after he had resigned, while he was then acting Secretary of War, and while his nomination as minister to Russia was pending in the Senate, and where it encountered opposition because of certain statements which I happened to make here upon this floor upon the day he resigned, about contracts made in the War Office.

The Clerk read as follows:

"In the mean time I take occasion to state that I have, myself, not made a single contract for any purpose whatever; having always interpreted the laws of Congress as contemplating that the heads of bureaus, who are experienced and able officers of the regular army, shall make all contracts for supplies for the branches of the service under their charge respectively.

"So far, I have not found any occasion to interfere with them in the discharge of this portion of their responsible duties.

"I have the honor to be, very respectfully,
your obedient servant, SIMON CAMERON,

Secretary of War.

"Hon. H. HAMLIN,
President of the Senate of the United States."

Mr. DAWES. I have stated that, in this solemn declaration, signed by the then Secretary of War, and addressed to the Senate when his nomination was pending, and when the accusation was made against him that he had made contracts for the purchase of arms, as stated by me upon this floor, to the amount of

one million ninety-six thousand muskets, he stated deliberately that he never made a contract, when the book I have before me, which is Executive Document No. 67, containing all the contracts made for arms by the War Department, recapitulates and sums up the whole matter in these words:

Muskets and Rifles.

Contracts by order of Secretary of War,	1,836,900
Contracts by the Chief of Ordnance...	64,400
Contracts by order of Major General Fremont.....	1,000
Contracts by order of Major P. V. Hagner.....	1,500
	1,903,800

This document, in the face of the solemn declaration of the then Secretary of War that he had never made one of these contracts, reveals contracts made by him, and by his order, to the amount of one million eight hundred and thirty-six thousand nine hundred muskets and rifles, and that upon the very day he made this statement—the 15th day of January, two days after he had resigned, and while he was acting Secretary of War, and while his nomination was pending in the Senate—he put his hand to a contract for swords and sabres to an unlimited amount—all that the parties, resident in Philadelphia, could furnish in six months; and this, too, against the protest of the Chief of Ordnance, now before me in print. It was a contract that had expired, or was about to expire, by its limitation, and which the Chief of Ordnance refused to extend, and gave this reason for not doing so, addressed to the Secretary of War:

“As regards the extension, I have to state that an arrangement has already been made for obtaining on prospective deliveries, one hundred and twenty-one thousand seven hundred and five swords and sabres; and the unlimited order to Messrs. Horstman was given, only because of short time to the deliveries of sabres of their own manufacture. I do not think an extension of the order is necessary or advisable.

“Respectfully, &c.,

“JAS. W. RIPLEY,

“Brigadier General.”

“Hon. SIMON CAMERON,

“Secretary of War.”

Beneath this is the extension of that contract by order of the Secretary of War, for four months; and still beneath that, on the 15th day of January, are these words:

JANUARY 15, 1862.

This order is extended for six months from the termination of the time mentioned above.

SIMON CAMERON,

Secretary of War.

Now, sir, it was this public statement of his, upon his responsibility as an officer of the Government, to which I have referred, that induced a distinguished Senator and colleague of mine, noble and generous-hearted, who would do no man any wrong, and who believes that all men tell the truth, to urge, after having moved, the unanimous confirmation of this man, whose name was then before the Senate, and to state, in words as kind towards me, his colleague in this House, as he was capable of using, that he had the authority of this man, Simon Cameron, for stating that I was altogether mistaken when I said that these contracts had been made.

Sir, the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania, the chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, says *falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*. I wish to quote these two things together, and let my friend from Pennsylvania answer them in the light of the principle which he has laid down.

I submit, then, that the charge of expending the public money as a reason why this committee should be discharged comes with ill grace from the quarter from whence it comes. Why, sir, who does not know, what all the papers stated, that political feuds were healed by horse contracts, and that the healing of them was celebrated by a great feast? I have once alluded to it myself. I am able now to state more particularly the details of the affair. It took four horse contracts, each for one thousand horses, to settle those old political feuds, and every one of those contracts cost the Government \$100,000—\$400,000 in four horse contracts; and let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, that some of them were in men's names who did not know of it until the contracts were made. It does not need to be told to gentlemen who know so much about the way things are done as we do here in this House, why it is and for whose benefit it is that large contracts are made in men's names without their knowing anything about it. My distinguished friend from Pennsylvania, [Mr. STEVENS,] who, in the discharge of what appeared to be a high duty, protested against such a man as Simon Cameron going into the Cabinet, the papers say, graced that feast with his presence, and that these persons were, over this entertainment, celebrating the restoration of harmony among old political antagonists, and some of them certainly knew the consideration. It seems to me that the \$400,000 should be saved to the Treasury somehow or other.

It is a poor expenditure of the public money just at this time when it is used for no better purpose than to heal political feuds. These gentlemen enjoyed themselves, the papers told us.

Mr. STEVENS. The gentleman will allow me to ask him a question, as I do not very well understand his allusion. I suppose he is referring to something not yet published; or is it to anything that has been published?

Mr. DAWES. I stated that it was published in all the papers.

Mr. STEVENS. In his remarks about the horse contracts, does the gentleman refer to anything contained in the report of the committee?

Mr. DAWES. No, sir; not to anything published in the report. I am speaking now of what is known to everybody. It did not take even the poor Van Wyck committee to find it out. [Laughter.] The parties fell out over one of these arrangements and told of it; and I have only to say that at that particular time there was, according to the newspapers, great harmony among these men. I do not know whether the gentleman from Pennsylvania on my left [Mr. MOORHEAD] was there or not.

Mr. MOORHEAD. I would like to know why the gentleman refers to me. I do not wish the gentleman from Massachusetts, and I will not permit him or any other gentleman, to put me in a false position. I want to know why he refers to me.

Mr. DAWES. I did not know the gentleman was there, and therefore I would not say that he was there.

Mr. MOORHEAD. Then why refer to me at all? What reason have you to suppose that I was there?

Mr. DAWES. Because the gentleman has avowed himself at this moment, and under all the lights of the present day, an ardent advocate and admirer of the man whose character, public and official, I have been commenting upon, and I thought it was but natural he should be invited to such a feast. I hope he was not overlooked. [Laughter.] I have only to say that the papers described it as being a delightful occasion; but I remembered, and I think the country remembered, all about the antecedents of these parties, and put the interrogatories, "why, and what for, and what has it cost?" I wonder they did not sing, as they closed, those lines of the poet appropriate to each of them:

"I know not, I care not, if guilt's in thy heart;
I but know that I love thee, whatever thou art."

[Laughter.]

Mr. Speaker, I have a word or two to say upon the suggestion of the gentleman from Pennsylvania, [Mr. STEVENS,] that he would move to discharge the committee if it were only in order. The gentleman's duties in this House and the duties of the committee have been of a different description. I have no disposition to criticise his performance of his. I know the ability with which he discharges them. I know very well what I encounter in attempting to reply to his attack upon the committee. I have only to say, that his labors and the labors of the committee are yet to be appreciated. When the thumb-screws of the tax bill which the committee, of which he is the head, originated and passed through the House from the necessities of the times, so nicely adjusted, shall begin to reach the bones of the poor, industrious, intelligent men of the country, and force from them so much of their hard earnings to replenish the Treasury of the nation, beggared, plundered, and depleted as it has been during this war, then, I fancy, this report of ours will come to be read; then, I fancy, if his constituents are as intelligent as mine are—and I have no doubt they are—they will ask him the question, and he will be compelled to answer it, "where is all this money gone?" They will want to know what was the need of putting out such lavish and unjustifiable contracts—contracts at such enormous and extravagant rates that the owners of them are willing to discount what is estimated at \$1,300,000 on a single contract, and then save two and a half per cent. comission. They will ask the question, and the committee of which I am an humble member, which has struggled all this time, while the gentleman from Pennsylvania, impelled by the necessities of the Government, has been racking his ingenuity to contrive how to reach the last farthing that can be reached to replenish the Treasury—this committee which has been placing their feeble efforts between the plunderers and the Treasury—are willing to abide that time. They are willing to let this book be read by the side of the tax bill at any time, and more especially at that particular time when the clamps of the tax bill shall be brought round about the industry and resources of the country, and when my friend from Pennsylvania will be turning the screw. If the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. STEVENS]

had made that motion, and if the House had adopted it, as I have no doubt they would have done that day, the committee then would have hailed it as a glorious deliverance from a most unpleasant duty, which no one member of it had sought, but which no one felt himself at liberty to shrink from.

I say to him, therefore, that if he will make a motion to discharge the committee, and will give me the liberty of asking for the yeas and nays on his motion, that is all I desire. I will say to him, as an honored and leading member of the party to which I belong, that I am credited at home as being a sincere member of that party for principle's sake, and I am willing to do what within me lies to see the consummation and final prevalence of those principles. Having devoted myself to them in the past, I am ready to do more for them; but I tell him that when he asks this House to discharge a committee whose efforts are to put themselves and this House between the Treasury and the plunderers of it, while he busies himself with making a tax bill to wrench out of the hard earnings of the people money to supply the leaks in the Treasury, he must, and I must, and the party to which we belong must, answer the question why it is so. This book and the report of the evidence yet unpublished cannot be hid under a bushel.

The gentleman must remember that in the first year of a Republican Administration, which came into power upon professions of reform and retrenchment, there is indubitable evidence abroad in the land that somebody has plundered the public Treasury well nigh in that single year as much as the entire current yearly expenses of the Government during that Administration which the people hurled from power because of its corruption. Do not understand me as saying that your friends and mine are alone responsible for this plunder, although we are in power and have the responsibility of the administration of this Government. My friends on the committee of different politics from me will have the justice to say that the Republican party is not the only one that has participated in these plunders. I will not say on which party the greater amount of this plunder rests. And yet we have got to answer for them, and justly, unless we put forth every effort in our power to prevent them, and unless we call these men to a rigid and strict account. It will not be enough to say that we found that we had a

committee who had made a mistake about a man's name; that we found that a blunder had been made in printing a man's letter and the committee did not correct it; and that therefore we discharged that committee, and proclaimed to these plunderers that they might go about their work without let or hindrance.

While it may be easily shown that this Republican party is not altogether responsible for plundering and profligacy, yet they cannot hold themselves guiltless before the country if they shrink from every effort, if they fail to sustain the hands and quicken the zeal of the men who have put their strength and their life for the past six months to the work; even although they may have made a mistake, as doubtless they have many in this large book; even although injustice to an individual may be, as probably it has been, committed in some instance; unless they sustain a committee which has been devoting itself by day to this work, and riding by night upon the cars, finding, while they are busy at work, that arrows are sent after them from behind to undermine the confidence of the country in them. I say that this Republican party, to which I am as devoted as my friend, cannot hold itself guiltless if it shrink from the work.

I hope the gentleman will take these words kindly from one whose political life, humble and unimportant as it is, is bound up in the principles of that party. He has all to sacrifice for those principles, but he is irreconcilably hostile here and everywhere to the thieving, the stealing, and the plundering that characterize the present time, in the concrete as well as in the abstract. Sir, I doubt not that Alexander Cummings and those other men have lost confidence in this committee, and that in their opinion there is wonderful unanimity among all the public plunderers and their defenders throughout the country. I hope it is so. I should feel a distrust of the committee if I found that its course was agreeable to these men. The House and the country hold the committee responsible for the truth and justice of what they say, and the country, sir, holds you and me and our friends responsible that we do nothing that shall tend to give the idea that we encouraged and countenanced this plunder. I proposed to speak plainly to my friends, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."

